RESEARCH HIGHLIGHT

July 2010

Socio-economic Series 10-005

2001 Participation and Activity Limitation Survey: Issue 2—Profile of the Housing Conditions of Canadians aged 15 Years and Older with a Seeing Disability

INTRODUCTION

This *Research Highlight* is one in a series produced through a CMHC research project that examined the housing conditions and characteristics of Canadians with disabilities.

This highlight begins with some general characteristics of the population with disabilities who are aged 15 years and older, and continues with a detailed profile of those with a seeing disability. Data used in this highlight are from the 2001 Participation and Activity Limitation Survey (2001 PALS). PALS is Canada's principal national survey focusing on people with disabilities. It provides information on the prevalence and severity of certain types of disability, on the use of and unmet need for supports, and on participation in various activities.

DEFINITIONS

Population with Disabilities Examined in this Highlight

This highlight examines the population 15 years of age and older only. The data presented here and in subsequent highlights will differ from the first issue in this series, which was based on the 2001 Census, because of some key differences between the 2001 Census and 2001 PALS with respect to identifying people with disabilities. The 2001 PALS identifies an estimated 945,000 fewer people aged 15 years and older with a disability than did the 2001 Census. This is because some individuals who responded "Yes" to the Census disability questions responded "No" to the more detailed questions on the 2001 PALS related to specific types of disabilities. It is also due to differences in the geographic coverage — the 2001 Census includes the people living in the territories and in First Nations communities but these areas and their populations are excluded from the 2001 PALS.

Disability in the 2001 PALS

The 2001 PALS asks about specific domains of functioning in which one may experience ongoing difficulties doing activities and identifies 10 specific types of disabilities (as well as an "unknown"[1] category):

- Mobility
- Agility
- Seeing
- Hearing
- Speaking/communicating
- Developmental
- Learning
- Memory
- Emotional/psychological
- Pain

[1] People who answer "Yes" to one of the questions on general limitations and "No" to the specific disability-type questions are classified as having "nature of disability unknown."

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Seeing Disability

In the 2001 PALS, an individual with a seeing disability is someone who has difficulty seeing ordinary newsprint or seeing clearly the face of someone from 4 metres (12 feet). The PALS also identifies individuals who have been diagnosed as legally blind.

Core Housing Need

Households[2] are considered to be in core housing need if they do not live in and do not have sufficient income to access acceptable housing. The term "acceptable housing" refers to housing that is in adequate physical condition, of suitable size and affordable.

- Adequate dwellings are those reported by their residents as not requiring any major repairs.
- Suitable dwellings have enough bedrooms for the size and make-up of resident households, according to the National Occupancy Standard (NOS) requirements.[3]
- Affordable dwellings cost less than 30% of before-tax household income.[4]

A household is said to be in core housing need if its housing falls below at least one of the adequacy, suitability or affordability standards and it would have to spend 30% or more of its before-tax income to pay the median rent of alternative local housing.

When discussing core housing need, household data exclude farm, band and reserve households (for which shelter costs are not collected by the census). It also excludes households with shelter costs that equal or exceed their income, or incomes of zero or less.

FINDINGS

General Characteristics of Persons with Disabilities Aged 15 Years and Older

Geography

There are 3,352,300 persons with disabilities who are 15 years of age and older, resulting in a national disability rate of 15% (see Table 1). There are significant variations among the provinces, with Quebec recording the lowest rate at 10%[5] and Nova Scotia the highest at 20%.

Table 1 Number of persons aged 15 years and older living in households, by disability status, in Canada and the provinces, 2001

	Persons aged 15 years and older			
	Total population[6]	without disabilities	with disabilities	Disability rate
CANADA	22,608,200	19,255,900	3,352,300	14.8%
Newfoundland and Labrador	405,500	348,000	57,500	14.2%
Prince Edward Island	102,000	84,500	17,500	17.2%
Nova Scotia	714,000	569,700	144,300	20.2%
New Brunswick	575,400	477,900	97,500	16.9%
Quebec	5,631,400	5,071,300	560,100	9.9%
Ontario	8,748,000	7,334,100	1,413,900	16.2%
Manitoba	748,300	614,900	133,400	17.8%
Saskatchewan	595,100	485,000	110,100	18.5%
Alberta	2,078,800	1,758,600	320,200	15.4%
British Columbia	3,009,600	2,511,900	497,700	16.5%

NOTE: Includes the population living in private non-farm, non-reserve households with household income greater than zero and average shelter cost-to-income ratio (STIR) less than 100%.
Source: 2001 PALS

[2] Refers to all private households. People living in collective dwellings (see Statistics Canada, 2001 Census Dictionary, Cat. No. 92-378-XIE, pages 190-193) are excluded by definition.

[3] According to the NOS, enough bedrooms means one bedroom for each cohabitation adult couple; unattached household member 18 years of age and over; same-sex pair of children under age 18; and additional boy or girl in the family, unless there are two opposite-sex siblings under 5 years of age, in which case they are expected to share a bedroom. A household of one individual can occupy a bachelor unit (i.e., a unit with no bedroom).

[4] Shelter costs include the following:

- For renters, rent and payments for electricity, fuel, water and other municipal services; and
- For owners, mortgage payments (principal and interest), property taxes, and any condominium fees, along with payments for electricity, fuel, water and other municipal services. Costs associated with maintenance and repairs are not considered part of shelter costs.

Income data collected by the 2001 Census refer to the calendar year preceding the Census, while shelter cost data are for 2001.

[5] A lower rate in Quebec has been observed in all of the disability surveys conducted by Statistics Canada.

[6] Housing conditions cannot be assessed for households that report shelter costs that equal or exceed their income or households that have incomes of zero or less. An estimated 837,500 people aged 15 or older are excluded from the data.

Table 2 Number and percent of persons aged 15 years and older living in households, by disability status, age group and sex, 2001

	Persons aged 15 years and older								
	without disabilities			with disabilities			Disability rate		
	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes
15 and older	9,449,700	9,806,100	19,255,900	1,487,800	1,864,500	3,352,300	13.6%	16.0%	14.8%
15 - 24	1,815,000	1,750,800	3,565,800	73,000	75,000	148,000	3.9%	4.1%	4.0%
25 - 44	3,892,500	4,051,200	7,943,700	283,900	334,400	618,300	6.8%	7.6%	7.2%
45 - 64	2,819,800	2,885,700	5,705,500	541,400	621,300	1,162,700	16.1%	17.7%	16.9%
65 and older	922,400	1,118,500	2,040,900	589,500	833,700	1,423,200	39.0%	42.7%	41.1%
Source: 2001 PALS									

Age and Gender

The rate of disability increases as age increases, and, in all age groups, the disability rate is higher among females than for males. The disability rate varies considerably by age group, from 4% for persons aged 15 to 24 years to 41% for people aged 65 years and older (see Table 2).

The age structure of the population with disabilities is very different from the population without disabilities. Over three quarters (77%) of persons aged 15 years and older who report a disability are over 44 years of age, compared to 40% of people 15 years or older without disabilities (see Figure 1). This difference in age structure is important to remember when comparing the social and economic characteristics of these two populations

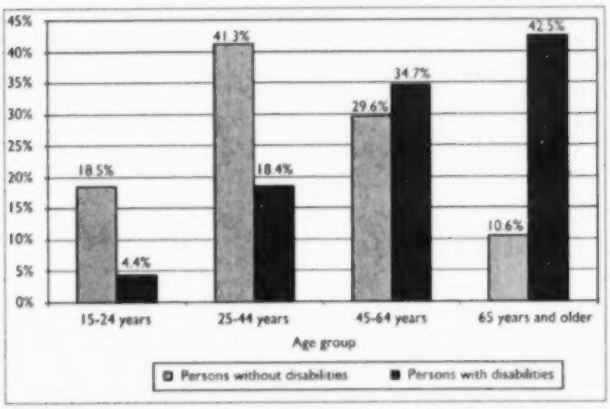

Figure 1 Pecentage distribution of persons without and with disabilities aged 15 and older, by age group, 2001

Living Arrangements

Persons with disabilities are less likely to be living in a family with children, and more likely to be living alone, than persons without disabilities. A total of 23% of persons with disabilities live in a family household comprised of a couple (married or living common law) with children, compared to 50% of persons without disabilities (see Table 3). However, 23% of persons with disabilities live alone, compared to 10% of persons without disabilities.

Table 3 Persons aged 15 years and older living in households by disability status and living arrangements, 2001

Living arrangements	Persons aged 15 years and older			
	without disabilities		with disabilities	
	(#)	(%)	(#)	(%)
All types of living arrangements	19,255,900	100.0%	3,352,300	100.0%
Living alone	2,012,500	10.5%	779,400	23.3%
Non family person, living with others	1,146,500	6.0%	266,400	7.9%
Lone parent family	1,808,300	9.4%	349,500	10.4%
Couple without children	4,748,700	24.7%	1,181,200	35.2%
Couple with children	9,539,900	49.5%	775,800	23.1%
Source: 2001 PALS				

Nature of Disabilities

The 2001 PALS includes three ways to look at disability characteristics:

- type(s) of disability that an individual reports
- number of types of disabilities that an individual reports, and
- a severity measure that includes the nature and extent of the individual's disability across all the types of disabilities reported by the individual.

The three most commonly reported disabilities are mobility/agility, pain and hearing. About 80% of those reporting a disability report a mobility and/or an agility disability (see Table 4). Since there is considerable overlap between those who report either of these two disabilities[7], they have been combined into one group for the purposes of this analysis. Almost 70% of persons with a disability report a disability due to pain, and close to one third (30%) report a hearing disability.

Table 4 Number and percent of persons aged 15 years and older living in households, by type of disability, 2001

	Number	(%)*
All types of disabilities	**3,352,300**	**100.0%**
Hearing	1,013,700	30.2%
Seeing	**586,800**	**17.5%**
Speaking/ Communicating	356,300	10.6%
Mobility/agility[7]	**2,692,800**	**80.3%**
Pain	2,332,300	69.6%
Learning	**442,000**	**13.2%**
Memory	414,900	12.4%
Developmental	**117,000**	**3.5%**
Emotional/Psychological	517,700	15.4%
Unknown	**94,400**	**2.8%**

Percentages add to more than 100% because people can report more than one disability.
Source: 2001 PALS

Most persons with disabilities (81%) report multiple disabilities. However, 19%, or 636,400 individuals, report only one type of disability and 37% or 1,226,500 persons report having two types of disabilities.

The severity of an individual's disability is assessed in the 2001 PALS based on the frequency and intensity of the limitations. For example, a person who has no difficulty walking and climbing stairs but who cannot stand in line for more than twenty minutes would have a mild mobility-related disability. A person who can move around only via a wheelchair would have a severe mobility-related disability. According to the 2001 PALS, 41%, or 1,378,700 persons, with disabilities have a severe or very severe disability. For 25% (838,800 individuals), the severity of disability is moderate, and for the remaining one-third (34% or 1,134,800), the severity of the disability is mild.

Persons with a Seeing Disability Aged 15 Years and Older

Geography

Among persons who report having a disability, an estimated 586,800, or 18%, have a seeing disability (see Table 5). The incidence of seeing disability varies among the ten provinces with Quebec showing the highest rate at 22% and Alberta the lowest rate at 16%. A total of 9%, or 54,600, of persons with a seeing disability are legally blind. Although Quebec has the highest incidence of seeing disability, only 4% of those individuals report that they are legally blind. In contrast, whereas Alberta has the lowest incidence of seeing disability, it has the second highest proportion of persons reporting that they are legally blind – 13%, or 6,500 persons.

[7] Of the 2,692,800 individuals who report having a mobility and/or agility disability, 72% or 1,952,000 report both types. For this reason, representatives from the community recommended that these two types of disabilities be combined for the purpose of this *Research Highlight* series.

Table 5 Number of persons aged 15 years and older living in households, by type of disability in Canada and the provinces, 2001

	Persons aged 15 years and older			% with a seeing disability	% with a seeing disability who are legally blind
	with any type of disability	with a seeing disability	with a seeing disability who are legally blind		
CANADA	3,352,300	586,800	54,600	17.5%	9.3%
Newfoundland and Labrador	57,500	10,000	1,000	17.4%	10.0%
Prince Edward Island	17,500	3,400	300	19.4%	8.8%
Nova Scotia	144,300	24,500	2,500	17.0%	10.2%
New Brunswick	97,500	19,100	2,000	19.6%	10.5%
Quebec	560,100	120,300	5,200	21.5%	4.3%
Ontario	1,413,900	226,400	23,600	16.0%	10.4%
Manitoba	133,400	26,200	2,600	19.6%	9.9%
Saskatchewan	110,100	22,000	3,000	20.0%	13.6%
Alberta	320,200	51,000	6,500	15.9%	12.7%
British Columbia	497,700	84,100	8,000	16.9%	9.5%

Source: 2001 PALS

Age and Gender

On a national level, persons with a seeing disability are older than those reporting any type of disability, with an average age of 64 years compared to 59 years. Women with a seeing disability are, on average, slightly older than men, with an average age of 65 compared to 62 years.

The incidence of seeing disability generally increases with age. While only 10% of persons aged 15 to 24 years with a disability report a seeing disability, the proportion increases to 21% for persons aged 65 years and older (see Table 6).

The percentage of females with disabilities who report a seeing disability is higher than for males (20% compared to 15%, respectively). The difference is especially pronounced among seniors aged 65 years and older with a disability, where 24% of women have a seeing disability compared to 17% of men in this age group.

However, males are more likely than females to be diagnosed as legally blind (10% compared to 9%, respectively). This is particularly the case among young males aged 15-24, where 21% of those with a seeing disability are legally blind compared to 11% of young females.

Table 6 Number of persons aged 15 years and older living in households, by type of disability, sex and age group, 2001

Sex	Age group	Persons aged 15 years and older		% with a seeing disability
		with any type of disability	with a seeing disability	
Both sexes	15 years and older	3,352,300	586,800	17.5%
	15 - 24 years	148,000	14,800	10.0%
	25 - 44 years	618,300	69,200	11.2%
	45 - 64 years	1,162,700	202,300	17.4%
	65 years and older	1,423,200	300,500	21.1%
Males	15 years and older	1,487,800	222,200	14.9%
	15 - 24 years	73,000	7,300	10.0%
	25 - 44 years	283,900	28,600	10.1%
	45 - 64 years	541,400	86,200	15.9%
	65 years and older	589,500	100,100	17.0%
Females	15 years and older	1,864,500	364,600	19.6%
	15 - 24 years	75,000	7,500	10.0%
	25 - 44 years	334,400	40,600	12.1%
	45 - 64 years	621,300	116,100	18.7%
	65 years and older	833,700	200,400	24.0%

Source: 2001 PALS

Presence of Other Types of Disabilities

About 89% (or 520,800) who report having a seeing disability also report having a mobility/agility disability and 74% (or 435,400) report a limitation in their activity due to pain (see Table 7). Persons with a seeing disability are almost twice as likely to have a memory disability as the total population with disabilities (23% versus 12%, respectively). Similarly, 18% of persons with a seeing disability also have a speaking/communicating disability, compared to 11% of persons reporting any type of disability.

Table 7 Distribution of persons aged 15 years and older with a seeing disability, by type of other disability, 2001

Type of disability	Distribution of types of disabilities for those with a seeing disability	
	(#)	(%)
Seeing	**586,800**	**100.0%**
Mobility/agility	520,800	88.8%
Hearing	**237,900**	**40.5%**
Speaking/communicating	107,700	18.4%
Developmental	**23,700**	**4.0%**
Learning	114,900	19.6%
Emotional/psychological	**117,500**	**20.0%**
Memory	136,000	23.2%
Pain	**435,400**	**74.2%**

Source: 2001 PALS

When asked to describe the main condition or health problem that causes their limitation in activity, the vast majority (92%) describe their main condition as physical or mental, while only 8%, or 46,300 persons, described a seeing disability as their main disability.

Severity of Disability

About 71% (or 417,800) of persons who report having a seeing disability have a severe or very severe disability (see Table 8). This proportion increases to 74% among persons who are legally blind. Among persons reporting any type of disability, only 41% (1,378,600) have a severe or very severe disability. By contrast, only 7% of persons with a seeing disability and only 5% of persons who are legally blind report having a mild disability compared to 34% of persons reporting any type of disability.

Table 8 Number of persons aged 15 years and older with disabilities living in households, by type of disability and severity of disability, 2001

Severity of disability	Persons aged 15 years and older					
	with any type of disability		with a seeing disability		with a seeing disability and legally blind	
	(#)	(%)	(#)	(%)	(#)	(%)
Total	**3,352,300**	**100.0%**	**586,800**	**100.0%**	**54,600**	**100.0%**
Mild	1,134,800	33.9%	43,400	7.4%	2,900	5.3%
Moderate	**838,800**	**25.0%**	**125,700**	**21.4%**	**11,000**	**20.1%**
Severe	903,500	27.0%	207,300	35.3%	21,300	39.0%
Very severe	**475,100**	**14.2%**	**210,500**	**35.9%**	**19,300**	**35.3%**

Source: 2001 PALS

When these data are examined by age, the largest difference occurs among persons aged 15 to 24 years. In this young age group, 56%, or 8,300 persons, who report having a seeing disability are classified as having a severe or very severe disability while 19%, or 2,800, are classified as having a mild disability. Among persons in the same age group who report any type of disability, a lower percentage (30%) have a severe or very severe disability than a mild disability (46%).

Housing Characteristics of Persons with a Seeing Disability who are Living in a Household in Core Housing Need

At the Canada level, 20% of persons aged 15 years and older who report having a seeing disability live in households in core housing need, more than twice the incidence of people without disabilities (9%) (see Table 9). Of the 54,600 persons who report a seeing disability and who are legally blind, 13,200, or 24%, live in a household in core housing need.

Geography

The incidence of persons 15 year or older with a seeing disability living in a household in core need varies significantly among the ten provinces, with the lowest incidence in Prince Edward Island (12%) and the highest incidence in Nova Scotia (24%). The largest difference between persons who report a seeing disability and who are living in a household in core housing need and those individuals who report no disability and who are also living in a household in core housing need occurs in Nova Scotia (24% versus 10% respectively[9]).

Table 9 Persons aged 15 years and older living in a household in core housing need, by disability status and in Canada and the provinces, 2001

	Persons aged 15 years and older living in a household in core housing need					
	with a seeing disability		with any type of disability		without disabilities	
	(#)	(%)	(#)	(%)	(#)	(%)
Canada	115,400	19.7%	563,900	16.8%	1,757,000	9.1%
Newfoundland and Labrador	10,000	23.0%	10,700	18.5%	35,900	10.3%
Prince Edward Island	3,400	11.8%	2,500	14.5%	6,600	7.8%
Nova Scotia	24,500	23.7%	25,100	17.4%	55,000	9.6%
New Brunswick	19,100	15.7%	11,700	12.0%	31,800	6.7%
Quebec	120,300	19.0%	89,200	15.9%	376,300	7.4%
Ontario	226,400	20.9%	247,800	17.5%	772,900	10.5%
Manitoba	26,200	13.0%	17,300	13.0%	40,600	6.6%
Saskatchewan	22,000	13.6%	12,400	11.3%	31,100	6.4%
Alberta	51,000	15.3%	45,100	14.1%	124,800	7.1%
British Columbia	84,100	23.3%	102,000	20.5%	282,100	11.2%

Source: 2001 PALS

Urban/Rural

The probability of living in a household in core housing need is higher in urban areas than in rural areas regardless of disability status. For persons who report having a seeing disability, the incidence of living in a household in core housing need is 21% in urban areas and 15% in rural areas. Among individuals who are legally blind, 24% who live in urban areas live in a household in core housing need, compared to 18% who live in rural areas.

Tenure

In Canada, the incidence of living in a household in core housing need for those aged 15 and older is significantly higher for renters than for owners (23% compared to 5%, respectively), and this pattern holds true regardless of disability status. More than one-third (37%) of persons with a seeing disability who live in rental households are in core need, compared to 9% persons with a seeing disability who live in dwellings owned by a member of the family (see Table 10). The incidence of core housing need for persons

Table 10 Persons aged 15 years and older living in households in core housing need, by disability status and tenure, 2001

Tenure	Persons aged 15 years and older living in a household in core housing need					
	with a seeing disability		with any type of disability		without disabilities	
	(#)	(%)	(#)	(%)	(#)	(%)
Canada – All dwellings	115,400	19.7%	563,900	16.8%	1,757,000	9.1%
Owned by a member of the family	33,100	9.1%	202,300	8.9%	673,500	4.8%
Rented	82,300	37.1%	361,600	33.6%	1,083,400	21.1%

Source: 2001 PALS

[9] Provincial estimates for persons who are legally blind are not released by Statistics Canada because of insufficient sample size.

with a seeing disability is higher than the incidence for persons reporting no disability both for those in rental housing (37% compared to 21%, respectively) and for those living in housing that is owned (9% compared to 5%, respectively).

Among persons who are legally blind, 48% live in rental households that are in core housing need, compared to 13% who live in dwellings that are in core housing need and are owned by a member of the family.

Special Features for Access and Egress and Special Features within the Home

The PALS 2001 collected information on the types of special features that people with disabilities use or need. These include, for example, ramps and lifts that assist with entering and leaving the home as well as features that facilitate mobility within the home such as grab bars, bath lifts and widened hallways or doorways.

The great majority (90%, or 104,200) of people with a seeing disability living in a household in core housing need indicated that they also have a mobility/agility disability (see Table 11). Among those 104,200 individuals, 67% or 70,200 do not use or require any special features to assist them with their daily life activities. Of the remaining 34,000 people who require special features, 22,900 have all the features that they need, 7,500 do not have any of the features that they need and 3,600 have some of the features but need others.

Among the 11,100 persons with a seeing and a mobility/agility disability living in core housing need with unmet needs for special features, an estimated 6,700 (60%) report that the unmet need is for grab bars or a bath lift in the bathroom and 3,800 (34%) report that it is for a ramp or street level entrance (see Table 12). Of the 11,100 persons, 4,300 (39%) live in single detached dwellings and 5,700 (51%) live in an apartment.

Table 11 Use of and need for special features for persons aged 15 years and older with seeing and mobility/agility disabilities living in a household in core housing need, 2001

Use of and need for special features	Persons aged 15 years and older that live in a household in core housing need who report having a seeing and mobility/agility disabilities		
	Population (#)	As % of those with seeing and mobility/agility disability (%)	As % of those that use or need special features (%)
Total with seeing and mobility/agility disability	**104,200**	**100.0%**	**n.a.**
Total that do not use or need special features	70,200	67.3%	n.a.
Total that use or need special features	**34,000**	**33.7%**	**100.0%**
Use some special features and do not need any others	22,900	22.0%*	67.4%
Use some special features and need others	**3,600**	**3.5%***	**10.6%**
Need some special features and have none	7,500	7.2%*	22.1%

* Calculated based on rounded numbers.
Source: 2001 PALS

Table 12 Number and percent of persons aged 15 years and older with seeing and mobility and/or agility disabilities living in a household in core housing need with unmet needs for special features to access or egress the home or assist within the home, by type of feature, 2001

Unmet need for special features	Persons aged 15 years and older that live in a household in core housing need with seeing and mobility and/or agility disabilities	
	(#)	(%)*
Total	**11,100**	**100.0%**
Ramps or street level entrances	3,800	34.2%
Automatic or easy to open doors (includes lever handles)	**3,200**	**28.8%**
Widened doorways or hallways	2,100	18.9%
Elevator or lift device	**2,900**	**26.1%**
Visual alarms or audio warning devices	**	**
Grab bars or a bath lift (in the bathroom)	**6,700**	**60.4%**
Lowered counters in the kitchen	**	**

* Components add to more than 100% since some individuals have more than one unmet need.
**Number suppressed because of sample size.
Source: 2001 PALS

Demographic and Socio-Economic Characteristics of Persons Aged 15 Years and Older with a Seeing Disability Living in a Household in Core Housing Need

Age and Gender

Regardless of disability status, females are more likely to be living in a household in core housing need than males (12% and 9%, respectively). Females with a seeing disability are much more likely to be living in a household in core housing need than males (21% versus 17%, respectively). Among those who are legally blind, 27% of females and 20% of males live in a household in core housing need.

As noted earlier, the population with a seeing disability is older than the general population with disabilities and the population without disabilities. This pattern is also seen for individuals living in households in core housing need. Among persons who report having a seeing disability and are living in a household in core need, 48% are aged 65 years and older, compared to 39% of persons reporting any type of disability and 12% of people without disabilities.

Males with a seeing disability who live in a household in core need are more likely to be younger than females; while 21% of such males are between the ages of 15 and 44, only 12% of females are in this age group (see Table 13).

Among persons who are living in a household in core housing need and are legally blind, 54% are aged 65 years and older. As with the population with seeing disabilities who are living in a household in core housing need, the majority (8,900 or 67%) are female.

Table 13 Persons aged 15 years and older living in a household in core housing need, number of persons and shares by age group, for each disability status and sex, 2001

Sex	Age group	Persons aged 15 years and older that live in a household in core housing need					
		with a seeing disability		with any type of disability		without disabilities	
		(#)	(%)	(#)	(%)	(#)	(%)
Both sexes	15 years and older	115,400	100.0%	563,900	100.0%	1,757,000	100.0%
	15 to 24	2,400	2.1%	26,500	4.7%	386,100	22.0%
	25 to 44	14,800	12.8%	120,700	21.4%	755,200	43.0%
	45 to 64	42,500	36.8%	199,200	35.3%	402,000	22.9%
	65 and older	55,700	48.3%	217,500	38.6%	213,700	12.2%
Males	15 years and older	37,100	100.0%	211,800	100.0%	745,100	100.0%
	15 to 24	1,500	4.0%	11,500	5.4%	182,200	24.5%
	25 to 44	6,300	17.0%	51,900	24.5%	317,200	42.6%
	45 to 64	17,900	48.2%	90,300	42.6%	181,200	24.3%
	65 and older	11,400	30.7%	58,100	27.4%	64,600	8.7%
Females	15 years and older	78,200	100.0%	352,000	100.0%	1,011,800	100.0%
	15 to 24	900	1.2%	15,100	4.3%	204,000	20.2%
	25 to 44	8,500	10.9%	68,700	19.5%	438,000	43.3%
	45 to 64	24,500	31.3%	108,900	30.9%	220,800	21.8%
	65 and older	44,300	56.6%	159,400	45.3%	149,100	14.7%

Source: 2001 PALS

Table 14 Persons aged 15 years and older living in a household in core housing need, number of persons and shares by disability status, for each type of living arrangement, 2001

Living arrangements	Persons aged 15 and older that live in a household in core housing need					
	with a seeing disability		with any type of disability		without disabilities	
	(#)	(%)	(#)	(%)	(#)	(%)
All types of living arrangements	**115,400**	**100.0%**	**563,900**	**100.0%**	**1,757,000**	**100.0%**
Living alone	62,000	53.7%	261,900	46.4%	370,300	21.1%
Non family person, living with others	**10,700**	**9.3%**	**38,500**	**6.8%**	**125,800**	**7.2%**
Lone parent family	17,600	15.3%	89,300	15.8%	407,400	23.2%
Family without children	**17,100**	**14.8%**	**103,200**	**18.3%**	**241,000**	**13.7%**
Family with children	8,000	6.9%	70,900	12.6%	612,300	34.8%
Source: 2001 PALS						

Living Arrangements

Over half (54%, or 62,000) of those with a seeing disability and who are living in a household in core housing need are living alone, compared to 21% (370,300) of those without disabilities (see Table 14). By contrast, a total of 7% of persons with a seeing disability who are living in a household in core housing need are part of a family with children, as compared to 35% of persons without disabilities who are living in a household in core housing need. These differences reflect the different age structure of the two populations.

Among the 62,000 persons with a seeing disability who are living in a household in core housing need and who are living alone, 37,400, or 60%, are aged 65 years and older. Of the 13,200 persons living in a household in core housing need who are legally blind, 6,600 are living alone; among those, 4,000, or 61%, are aged 65 years and older.

Immigrant Status

Among persons aged 15 and older who are living in a household in core housing need and who report having a seeing disability, 24%, or 28,000, are immigrants, compared to 37%, or 650,100 persons, without disabilities (see Table 15).

Among the population who are living in a household in core housing need who are legally blind, 4,300 or 33% are immigrants.

Household Income

Regardless of disability status, the majority of persons that live in a household in core housing need have low incomes: 91% of persons with a seeing disability are in core need households in the lowest quintile, compared to 77% of those without disabilities, and 9% of those with a seeing disability live in a core need household in the second lowest (moderate income) quintile, compared to 22% of people without disabilities (see text box and Table 16).

Table 15 Persons aged 15 years and older that live in a household in core housing need, number of persons and shares by disability status for each immigrant status, 2001

Immigrant status	Persons aged 15 and older that live in a household in core housing need					
	with a seeing disability		with any type of disability		without disabilities	
	(#)	(%)	(#)	(%)	(#)	(%)
Canada – All immigrant status	**115,400**	**100.0%**	**563,900**	**100.0%**	**1,757,000**	**100.0%**
Non-immigrant	87,400	75.7%	426,500	75.6%	1,106,900	63.0%
Immigrant (1992 to 2001)	**2,100**	**1.8%**	**15,700**	**2.8%**	**304,700**	**17.3%**
Immigrant before 1992	25,900	22.4%	121,700	21.6%	345,400	19.7%
Source: 2001 PALS						

For the purpose of this analysis, the pre-tax household income of Canadian households with at least one person aged 15 years and older was assessed and divided into five equally sized income groups or quintiles ranging from low-income to high-income.

High Income:	**$96,936 or more**
Upper Income:	**$67,812 - 96,935**
Middle Income:	**$46,896 - $67,811**
Moderate Income:	**$27,418 - $46,895**
Low Income:	**Less than $27,418**

Among persons with a seeing disability who are living in a household in core housing need and who are legally blind, 90%, or 11,900, lived in a household with income in 2000 of less than $27,418.

Sources of Personal Income

Only 8% (8,800) of persons aged 15 and older with a seeing disability who live in a household in core housing need report wages and salaries as a source of personal income, compared to almost half (48%) of persons without disabilities (see Table 17). Similarly, persons with a seeing disability in core housing need are less likely to report self-employment as a source of income than persons without disabilities who are living in core housing need (2%, compared to 7%). This is not surprising since almost half (48%) of those with a seeing disability in core need are are seniors aged 65 years and older.

Table 16 Persons aged 15 years and older that live in a household in core housing need, number and shares by disability status for each household income quintile, 2001

Household Income in 2000—Quintiles	Persons aged 15 years and older that live in a household in core housing need					
	with a seeing disability		with any type of disability		without disabilities	
	(#)	(%)	(#)	(%)	(#)	(%)
Total	115,400	100.0%	563,900	100.0%	1,757,000	100.0%
High, Upper, Middle ($46,896 or more)	*	*	*	*	27,200	1.5%
Moderate ($27,418-$46,895)	10,400	9.0%	59,000	10.5%	383,100	21.8%
Low (less than $27,418)	104,700	90.7%	501,500	88.9%	1,346,600	76.6%

* Number suppressed because of sample size.
Source: 2001 PALS

Table 17 Persons aged 15 years and older living in a household in core housing need, number and shares by disability status for each source of personal income, 2001

Sources of personal income	Persons aged 15 years and older that live in a household in core housing need					
	with a seeing disability		with any type of disability		without disabilities	
	(#)	(%)	(#)	(%)	(#)	(%)
Canada – All sources of income	115,400	100.0%	563,900	100.0%	1,757,700	100.0%
Wages and salaries	8,800	7.6%	93,800	16.6%	843,100	48.0%
Income from self-employment	1,800	1.6%	20,500	3.6%	128,400	7.3%
Income from Government	109,200	94.6%	532,300	94.4%	1,434,500	81.6%
Other income, such as retirement pensions, dividends and interest on bonds, deposits and savings, alimony, child support, scholarships, etc.	2,500	2.2%	28,500	5.1%	121,100	6.9%

Percentages add to greater than 100% because people report all sources of personal income.
Source: 2001 PALS

Most households in core housing need report some income from government sources.[10] Almost all (95%) of people who report having a seeing disability that live in a household in core housing need have income from government sources, compared to 82% of people without disabilities that live in a household in core housing need.

Level of Education

People with a seeing disability that live in a household in core housing need are less likely to have completed high school and less likely to have gone to university than persons without disabilities.

Among persons with a seeing disability that live in a household in core housing need, 66% did not finish high school, compared to 40% of persons without disabilities living in core housing need (see Table 18). Only 7% of persons aged 15 years and older with a seeing disability and who are living in a household in core housing need report post-secondary education at a university, compared to 21% for persons without disabilities who are living in a household in core housing need.

The incidence of core housing need generally diminishes with higher levels of educational attainment. While the overall incidence of core housing need is 20% for people with a seeing disability, it ranges from 24% for those who did not complete high school to 9% for those with at least a bachelor degree (see Table 19). Trade certificates and other non-university training also decrease the incidence of core housing need.

Among persons who are legally blind who live in a household in core housing need, about a quarter report having some post-secondary education and and about three-quarters have secondary school graduation or less.

Table 18 Persons aged 15 years and older living in a household in core housing need, number and shares by disability status for highest level of education, 2001

Highest level of education	Persons aged 15 and older who are living in a household in core housing need			
	with a seeing disability		without disabilities	
	(#)	(%)	(#)	(%)
Canada - All levels of education	**115,400**	**100.0%**	**1,757,000**	**100.0%**
Less than high school graduation	76,300	66.1%	708,000	40.3%
Secondary school graduation certificate	**12,100**	**10.5%**	**247,400**	**14.1%**
Trades certificate or diploma	2,600	2.3%	53,300	3.0%
Other non-university	**16,800**	**14.6%**	**378,900**	**21.6%**
University but no degree	5,000	4.3%	173,600	9.9%
At least bachelor degree	**2,600**	**2.3%**	**195,800**	**11.1%**

Source: 2001 PALS

[10] Includes Old Age Security, Guaranteed Income Supplement, benefits from Canada or Quebec Pension Plan, benefits from Employment Insurance, and other income from government sources such as provincial income supplements and welfare payments.

Table 19 Incidence of core housing need for persons 15 years and older, by disability status and highest level of education, 2001

Highest level of education	Persons aged 15 and older that live in a household in core housing need	
	with a seeing disability	without disabilities
Canada - All levels of education	19.7%	9.1%
Less than high school graduation	23.6%	13.2%
Secondary school graduation certificate	18.4%	8.7%
Trades certificate or diploma	16.1%	8.0%
Other non-university	14.6%	7.5%
University but no degree	13.7%	8.3%
At least bachelor degree	8.7%	6.0%

Source: 2001 PALS

Health Status

More than half (59%) of persons with a seeing disability who live in a household in core housing need assess their general health status as fair or poor, compared to 48% of persons who report any type of disability and who are living in a household in core housing need (see Table 20). Among persons who are legally blind and who are living in a household in core housing need, 49% provide an assessment of their general health as fair or poor.

There is considerable variation in self-reported health status by age. Over half of persons aged 15 to 24 years who report having a seeing disability and who are living in a household in core housing need assess their general health as excellent or very good (54%, or 1,300 individuals). Among persons in the older age groups, the reverse is true with the majority assessing their health as fair or poor: 60% among persons aged 25 to 44 years, 71% among persons aged 45 to 64 years and 59% among persons aged 65 years and older.

The proportion of persons reporting "excellent" or "very good" health decreases as the number of types of disabilities increase. For example, among persons with only a seeing disability who are living in a household in core housing need, 59% gave these responses. Among persons with a seeing disability and one other disability, the proportion drops to 44% and for those with a seeing disability and two other types of disabilities, the proportion drops to 23%.

Table 20 Persons aged 15 years and older with disabilities that live in a household in core housing need, by type of disability and general health status, 2001

General health status (self-assessed)	Persons aged 15 and older that live in a household in core housing need			
	with a seeing disability		with any type of disability	
	(#)	(%)	(#)	(%)
Canada – All levels of general health status	115,400	100.0%	563,900	100.0%
Excellent/Very good	18,800	16.3%	113,300	20.1%
Good	24,400	21.1%	157,100	27.9%
Fair/Poor	67,700	58.7%	269,700	47.8%
Not stated, refusal or don't know	4,500	3.9%	23,900	4.2%

Source: 2001 PALS

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Persons Aged 15 and Older with Disabilities

General Characteristics

- 15% of Canadians aged 15 and older report some level of disability, with the lowest rate in Quebec (10%) and the highest in Nova Scotia (20%).
- The rate of disability increases as age increases, and the disability rate is higher in all groups for females than for males.
- 23%, or 779,400 persons, aged 15 and older with disabilities live alone.
- 80%, or 2,692,800 persons, aged 15 and older who report a disability report having a mobility and/or an agility disability.
- 41% or 1,378,600 persons aged 15 years and older with disabilities are classified as having severe or very severe level of disability.

Persons Aged 15 and Older with a Seeing Disability

General Characteristics

- 18%, or 586,800, of Canadians with disabilities aged 15 years and older have a seeing disability. The incidence varies among the provinces, with the lowest in Alberta at 16% and the highest in Quebec at 22%.
- The proportion of persons aged 15 and older who report having a seeing disability increases as age increases and this hold true for both males and females.
- 92% of people with a seeing disability describe their main condition as being a physical or mental disability.
- Almost three-quarters (417,800, or 71%) of persons who report having a seeing disability are classified as having a severe or very severe disability.

Persons Aged 15 and Older with a Seeing Disability Living in a Household in Core Housing Need

Housing Characteristics

- 20%, or 115,400 persons, aged 15 years and older with a seeing disability live in a household in core housing need; the incidence varies considerably among the provinces, with the highest (23%) reported in British Columbia and the lowest in Prince Edward Island (12%).
- 37%, or 82,300 persons, aged 15 and older with a seeing disability that live in rented accommodation are living in a household in core housing need compared to 9% or 33,100 of those who live in accommodation owned by a member of the family.
- 90%, or 104,200, of people with a seeing disability living in a household in core housing need indicated that they also have a mobility/agility disability.

Demographic and Socio-Economic Characteristics

- The majority (54%, or 62,000) of persons aged 15 and older with a seeing disability and that live in a household in core housing need live alone compared to 21% (370,300) of persons without disabilities.
- 24%, or 28,000, of persons aged 15 and older with a seeing disability that live in a household in core housing need are immigrants.
- The great majority (91%) of persons aged 15 and older with a seeing disability that live in a household in core housing need were in the lowest income quintile (had a before-tax household income of less than $27,417) in 2000.
- 8%, or 8,800, of persons aged 15 and older who report having a seeing disability and who live in a household in core housing need report wages and salaries as a source of personal income, compared to 48% (843,100) of those without disabilities that live in a household in core housing need.

- 77%, or 88,400, persons aged 15 and older who report having a seeing disability and who live in a household in core housing need report their highest level of education as secondary school certificate or less, compared to 54%, or 955,400, of people without disabilities that live in a household in core housing need.
- 59% (67,700) of persons aged 15 and older who report having a seeing disability and who live in a household in core housing need report a health status of fair or poor.

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